

THE WOMAN'S DREADNOUGHT

Published by the East London Federation of the Suffragettes.
Edited by SYLVIA PANKHURST.

No. 15.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27TH, 1914.

PRICE ONE HALFPENNY.

THE EAST END DEPUTATION TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

Great Procession and Trafalgar Square Demonstration, *See page 28* SATURDAY, JUNE 27

Form up at Bow Bridge at 2.30

**MARCH TO DEMAND VOTES FOR
WOMEN AND THE RELEASE OF
THE PRISONERS.**

**Come and hear the working
women who interviewed the
Prime Minister.**

THIS WEEK'S MEETINGS.

Sunday, June 28th, 5 p.m.—Demonstration,
Trafalgar Square.
Monday, June 29th, 3 p.m.—Women's
Meeting—400 Old Ford Rd., Bow.
8.30 p.m.—Swiss Cottage, S. Hackney—
Mrs. Laski.
8.30 p.m.—"Peacock," Freemason's Rd.,
Canning Town—Mrs. Parsons, Mr.
Rettich.
Tuesday, June 30th, 8 p.m.—Dock Gates,
Poplar—Miss Gilliat.
8 p.m.—Limehouse, Burdett Rd., and
Coutts Rd.—Miss Feek.
8 p.m.—Women's Hall, 400 Old Ford Rd.,
Members' "At Home."
Wednesday, July 1st, 8 p.m.—319 East India
Dock Rd., Poplar—Miss Elsa Myers.
8 p.m.—Crowder's Hall, 173 Bow Rd.—
Mrs. Haverfield.
Thursday, July 2nd, 2.30 p.m.—319 East India
Dock Rd., Poplar—Women's Meeting.
2.30 p.m.—Deacon's Vestry, Burdett Rd.,
Limehouse—Women's Meeting.
8 p.m.—124 Barking Rd., Canning Town—
Miss Hicks.
8 p.m.—Woodstock Rd., Poplar—Mrs.
Schlettee, Mr. Jouning.
Friday, July 3rd, 8 p.m.—Beckton Rd.,
Canning Town—Mrs. Laski.
8 p.m.—Piggott St., Poplar—Miss Guttridge.
8 p.m.—400 Old Ford Rd.—Members'
Meeting.

WE AWAIT A REPLY.

The following letter was sent
to the Prime Minister by Mrs.
Scurr, the leader of the deputa-
tion, on Monday morning:—

June 22nd, 1914.

The Right Honourable
H. H. Asquith, Esq.,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing St., S.W.

Sir,—I am instructed by the East
London Deputation, which waited
upon you on Saturday, the 20th inst.,
and by the East London Federation
of the Suffragettes, to write thanking
you for having received the deputa-
tion, and to state that we await the
reply to the demand put before you,
namely, a vote for every woman over
21, to which you have promised to
give your careful and mature con-
sideration. We hope to receive your
reply in regard to this point in the
course of a few days.

In regard to our second request
that unconditional release should be
granted to Miss Sylvia Pankhurst and
Mrs. Walker, who have been committed
to prison, in default of finding sureties,
on account of their speeches, I think
that the following data may be useful
to you:—Miss Sylvia Pankhurst was
committed on the 8th July, 1913, to
three months' imprisonment, and has
since served 65 days of that sentence,
and been re-arrested nine times. Mr.
George Lansbury, who was sentenced
for precisely the same offence, was
released after four days, and has not
been re-arrested. On the 15th May,
1914, Mrs. Drummond and Mrs. Dacre
Fox were also committed for the same
offence, but were only sentenced to
one month's imprisonment respec-
tively, as in the case of Mrs. Walker,
who was committed on June 16th.
We await your reply also in regard to
this second matter.

Faithfully yours,
JULIA SCURR.

VERBATIM REPORT.

On Saturday, June 20th, a deputation of
six East End women, led by Mrs. Scurr,
waited on Mr. Asquith at 10 Downing Street
in accordance with his promise. Mrs. Scurr
read the following speech:—

Sir.—We are members of the East
London Federation of the Suffragettes,
an organisation which has sprung up
in East London during the last two

78., have either little children or aged
parents dependent on them. It is true
that something has been done in the
direction of setting up Minimum
Wage Boards, but the wages fixed by
these Boards are exceedingly low,
reaching in no case, we believe, more
than 13s. 6d. for a full week's work
for adult women, whereas in most of



THE DEPUTATION.

years, but we represent more than this
organisation. We represent the
general popular movement for Votes
for Women in East London, which is
of tremendous numerical strength and
enthusiasm, and consists of both men
and women. We are part of a deputa-
tion which was elected at three great
and crowded demonstrations held in
Poplar, Canning Town, and Bow and
Bromley.

We are sorry that our leader, Miss
Sylvia Pankhurst, is not with us to
introduce this deputation, because of
the work that she has done in arousing
the women of East London to the im-
portance of the vote in their daily lives,
and also because she could have put
the case more ably than we can.

We ask you first to consider the
position of women wage-earners. In
our district it is a common thing for
adult women to earn but 7s. or 8s. for
a full week's work, and we are told
that the average wage of women
throughout the country is but 7s. We
assure you, and we feel that you must
know it, that it is impossible for a
woman with only herself to keep to
live decently on such a miserable
pittance. We would point out to you
that there came before the Alien
Emigration Board recently the case of
a Russian girl who was to be employed
by a tailor at a wage of 13s. 6d. The
Board decided to refuse to admit her
until her prospective employer agreed
to pay her 17s. 6d., on the ground that
a woman cannot live in London on a
less sum. Yet many of our own
women, who are earning no more than

the sweated trades there is at certain
seasons a great deal of short time.

We ask you next to consider es-
pecially the question of married
women. Many of us are the mothers
of large families, and have a hard
struggle to make ends meet on the
wages that our husbands bring home
to us. As a rule the husband scarcely
knows how the money is disposed of;
it is the wife who is obliged to do it;
and the constant strain and anxiety
which this entails is illustrated with
terrible clearness by the number of
cases of suicide amongst married
women who have found it impossible
to manage, which have recently taken
place. Any rise in the price of rent,
foods, and other household com-
modities affects us women vitally, and we
need not point out that these are
intimately bound up with the question
of Free Trade *versus* Protection, which
bulks so largely in the political pro-
grammes of to-day.

Parliament is constantly dealing
also with questions affecting the
education and care of our children,
with the houses in which we live, and
more and more with every item of our
daily lives.

The Insurance Act has shown the
awful amount of sickness that there is
amongst married women, and, in de-
ciding the questions connected with
sickness and maternity benefit for
women, we claim that our point of
view should be represented.

The position of working-class
women is one which we all feel deeply.
Our husbands die on the average at a

Both the members of the depu-
tation and the East London Fed-
eration of the Suffragettes wish
to make it quite clear that they
do not repudiate the militant
measures of other organisations.
They carry on their own militant
fight for the vote in accordance
with their view of what is suited
to them.

Miss Sylvia Pankhurst did not
accompany the deputation, not
because any proviso had been
made to exclude her, but because
she was too unwell to do so.
She wishes to contradict the
statement, made by the "Times,"
that when she arrived at the
entrance to St. Stephen's Hall,
on Thursday, June 18th, she sent
in a violent message to the
Speaker and afterwards apolo-
gised.

much earlier age than do the men of
other classes. Modern industrialism
kills them off rapidly, both by accident
and overwork. When we are left,
often with a family of young children
to support, we are able, as we pointed
out earlier, to earn but the scantiest
of wages, and we receive but little help
from the Government of our country.
The Poor Law has treated us merci-
lessly. It is hated by every poor
woman. In many cases out-relief is
altogether denied to the widow, as it
is to the deserted wife, and only the
workhouse is offered, which means
separation from the children. Where
out-relief is given it is surrounded by
the most humiliating conditions,
which cause us, as self-respecting
women, very great indignation and
distress.

We here can speak with much feeling
on these matters, for we know by bitter
experience the terrible struggle with
absolute want that our widowed sisters
have to face from no fault of their
own. You will, perhaps, say that
women are allowed to vote for
and become members of Boards of
Guardians, but we would point out
that the women Local Government
voters form something less than one-
sixth of the total electorate, and the
Boards of Guardians are obliged to
administer the rules of the Local
Government Board, which is controlled
by Parliament.

Questions of morality and of the
relations between the sexes affect all
of us women very vitally. We working
women are too poor to obtain divorce,
but many are obliged to apply for
legal separation orders, and when we
have the misfortune to do so, we find
that the law deals with us very harshly
and inadequately. Many of us feel
keenly the need for reform in this
matter.

Then there is the question of those
of our poor unmarried girls who,
perhaps you would say, weakly, have
been led away by some man, very
often of the richer classes. These
girls are left to bear the whole of the
shame and trouble; and we might
have much to say on the question of
affiliation orders.

We feel most earnestly and emphati-
cally that it is gravely unjust to
pass legislation in matters of this
kind without consulting the
women of the country.

Then there are the painful
questions of the White Slave
Traffic and Prostitution. The
root of both of these evils we
feel to be economic and bound
up with the unsatisfactory politi-
cal and social status of women.
Here again we feel that it is
both unwise and unjust to legis-
late without the help of women.

(continued on page 58)



NEARLY 90 YEARS' REPUTATION.

Neave's Food

ensures healthy happy children, stamina to invalids,
and robust old age by its bone and body-building
qualities. Specially recommended by "The Lancet,"
"British Medical Journal," Sir Chas. A. Cameron,
C.B., M.D., Medical Officer of Health and Analyst
for Dublin, etc., and other famous Authorities.

Used in Rearing the Royal
Children of Russia, and
themselves to all classes testify
to its excellent virtues. For
instance: Mrs. KAIN, 5,
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"DR.—ADVISED ME
TO GIVE MY TWIN
BOYS OF SIX WEEKS
'OLD YOUR NEAVE'S
FOOD.' I have never
lost a night's rest, and
they have cut their teeth
without any trouble. Your
Food also does away with
all need of medicine and
casser oil."—Aug. 22, 1912.
"Hints about Baby" sent free.
Sample for 2d. postage men-
tioning this publication to
JOSHUA E. NEAVE & CO.,
Fordingbridge, England.

I wish to become a member of the
EAST LONDON FEDERATION OF THE
SUFFRAGETTES.

Name

Address

I enclose 1d. to cover membership
and postage.

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When I advertised in your Paper before,
I found it brought me custom. Therefore
I advertise my change of address—

JAMES PAYNE,

Scaphic Boot and Shoe Maker,

400 OLD FORD RD., BOW.

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A. GLIKSTEN,
Advertisement Manager.

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SONS, and Messrs. WILLING.

Annual Subscription: Post free, 9s. 6d.

No. 15.—Saturday, June 27th, 1914.

Bravely and willingly we bear our
share of the World's burdens. Why,
then, deny us the right to Vote, which
would dignify our labour and increase
our Power of Service.

WHAT WILL THE ANSWER BE?

The deputation of East London
women—elected by popular vote at
great open public meetings, and
voicing a demand decided on by
popular vote—has at length been re-
ceived by the Prime Minister.

Mr. Asquith has heard the deeply
moving speeches of the women. They
have told him of the constant anxiety
and struggle, the bitter cruel hard-
ships, and the ceaseless contriving of
their daily lives. The flimsy artificial-
ities of anti-suffragism, which only
exist in the imagination of those who
are out of touch with the realities of
life, have been torn aside by these
women—these mother toilers, who are
bearing the heaviest burdens of the
world.

And Mr. Asquith himself has ad-
mitted virtually that they have done
this, that these women have proved
their right to the vote, anti-suffragist
though he has always called himself
in the past.

The Prime Minister summed up the
case which the women had put to him
quite justly, saying: "The economic
conditions under which women labour
in a community like, for instance, the
East End of London, are such that, in
the way of legislation and administra-
tion, we cannot get substantial and
intelligent reform unless women
themselves have a voice in choosing
representatives for Parliament."

But though he said this and admit-
ted that their statements "correspond
to the actual facts of East End life,"
though he expressed approval of the
terms on which the women demanded
their enfranchisement, declaring that
"If the change has to come, we must
face it boldly and make it thorough

going and democratic in its basis,"
Mr. Asquith left the women without
having given them a reply. He
promised that the demand for a
Government measure to give a vote
to every woman over 21 should have
his "very careful and mature consid-
eration," and he twice repeated this
assurance, but we do not yet know
what the result of that consideration
is to be.

Mrs. Scurr, on behalf of the deputation, has written to remind Mr. Asquith
that we await his definite reply. We
await it with urgency and impatience,
because of the growing extremity of
our need, but in the meantime, friends,
we have scored a triumphant victory,
of which the most precious fruit is
that we have learnt that if we but will
with our whole heart, and work
together with all the strength that we
have, we can win even those things
that may at first seem impossible.
Since first we wrote to ask the Prime
Minister to receive the deputation we
have passed through a time of trial
and exertion which, for some, brought
with it much fear and doubt and
grief. But let us bear this time always
in remembrance; for the result,
unfinished though it is, should hearten
us for many another fight.

One thing we must never forget is
the paramount importance of our
great popular movement for woman's
freedom here in East London. Be-
cause we were able to go marching—
not a mere handful, but a vast
concourse of men and women—the
justice of our demand to be heard was
at length admitted. Had we been but
a few, we should assuredly have failed.

We must continue our work down
here with renewed earnestness, ex-
tending our boundaries and opening
new centres. We must have all the
people with us, we must have every
household reading the *Women's Dread-*
nought—we can do it if we will!

We must not rest on our oars.
We must set ourselves to gain the
answer we want from the Prime
Minister. He is considering our de-
mand. We must make up our minds
to induce him to say "Yes" to us
and to bring in that Government
measure very soon.

People may tell us that Parliament
does not want to work after August,
that the House of Lords would throw
out the Bill if they did, that Ulster
is giving trouble and all sorts of
other things. But, after all, every-
one knows that these are but excuses
—obstacles will be thrust aside and
the question will be settled—when
the time is ripe. It is our duty to be
the elements that shall ripen the time.

It may be that the Prime Minister
will say "Yes" to us in a day or two
—it may be that he will say "No."
But we must determine that his final
answer shall soon be given as we
wish it. We must organise to that
end. "No Vote, No Rent" is our
strongest weapon. Who will fill up
the forms below?

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

I promise to give £ s. d. to
the "No Vote, No Rent" Strikers'
Fund after the strike is started.

Name

Address

I promise to give £ s. d.
to the "No Vote, No Rent" Strike
propaganda.

Name

Address

I promise to join the "No Vote,
No Rent" Strike.

Name

Address

VOTES FOR WOMEN CHOIR.

A choir for women's and men's
voices is to be started shortly at the
Women's Hall. The first practice be-
gan on Thursday, last. All those
who wish to join should write to the
Choir Secretary, 400 Old Ford Road,
Bow.

BOARD RESIDENCE; good; close to
Sea; 15s. per week.—Wood, 4 Belle
Vue Road, Ramsgate.

(continued from page 57.)

We would further point out that
whilst women are taxed on exactly the
same basis as men, and like men are
obliged to obey the laws, they are
allowed no voice in these questions.
We know that every year large numbers
of poor women are sent to prison for
contempt of court because they have
been unable to pay their rates and
taxes. Some of these are quite old
women who have worked hard all
their lives, and never before come
into contact with the law. To us this
seems a most cruel hardship.

We women of East London are
much concerned in regard to social
conditions in our district. There is
very great poverty around us and
rents are terribly high. There is much
unemployment amongst the men, and
a very large proportion of the wives
are the principal breadwinners,
although they are both the child-
bearers and keepers of the home. We
want to say to you that, in our view,
a woman who is attending to her home
is as much a wage earner as if she
went out into a factory, and that
because women bring children into
the world they perform the greatest of
all services to the State, and they have
the greatest of all reasons to desire to
help in securing its welfare. In our
opinion, our country, especially in
districts like East London, is in many
ways grossly unfit to receive the
children that we bring into the world.
We feel that we have a right to help
in improving the conditions under
which we and our children live. We
learn that the women of other coun-
tries, of Norway, Finland, Denmark,
eleven of the United States, and our
own colonies, Australia and New
Zealand, whose need of the vote is in
many ways less acute than ours, have
secured enfranchisement, and are
coming in with new and fresh
enthusiasm to take part in the govern-
ment of their country. We urge that
it is time that we also were admitted
to citizenship, and allowed to take our
part in moulding the conditions under
which we live.

We know that there are some who
belittle representative government
and declare that the vote is useless,
but we cannot think that you, sir, as
Prime Minister of this country, will
assent to such a view.

The demand which we have come
make to you to-day is one that we
believe has not hitherto been made by
any Woman Suffrage deputation.
Our demand is for the form of franchise
for women that you have repeatedly
said that you could best understand,
and with which you would be most in
sympathy. It is the form of franchise
which you have declared your inten-
tion of establishing for men in the
near future. It is the one for which
your Party is said to stand—a vote
for every woman over 21.

The great public demonstrations
which elected us to speak to you
to-day, unanimously decided that we
should lay before you the demand for
an immediate Government measure
for a vote for every woman over 21.
This demand is supported by an
enormous volume of working-class
opinion throughout the country,
especially in our own district, where
tremendous and splendidly enthusi-
astic demonstrations have repeatedly
been held on this subject. Organised
labour throughout the country has
long made this demand, and for many
years past both the Trade Union and
the Labour Party annual conferences
have declared for it.

The question of Votes for Women
has many times been debated in the
House of Commons. Over 400 of the
Members and a majority of every
Party in the House are pledged to its
support, and during this Parliament
Bills for the Enfranchisement of
Women have passed the second
reading by the great majorities of 110
and 167.

We would remind you that since
1865 women have been working very
earnestly and continuously for this
reform, and a growing impatience has
resulted from the long delay in
arriving at a settlement. Acute forms
of militancy have sprung up in another
society, and in our own districts
considerable popular discontent has
manifested itself, and there is a great
demand for a No Vote, No Rent strike,
which is certain to take place before
long, if the vote is not granted.

It is common knowledge that all
great Statesmen, and especially those
of your own Party, have declared that
where popular unrest springs up, the
right course is to remove the cause.
We ask you to do this without further
delay. We feel sure that you must
realize that the Suffrage agitation,
both constitutional and militant, will
never die down until its end has been
achieved, and that votes must be
granted to women sooner or later.
We urge that it should be now. We
know that you have always said that
you were not a Suffragist, but we
would remind you that great States-
men, Sir Robert Peel, in regard to
the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the
Duke of Wellington on the question
of Catholic Emancipation, have set
aside their own views in order to
further the public good.

Finally, we urge you to bring in a
Government measure for a Vote for
Every Woman over 21, and to do so
immediately, and we ask it especially
because of our urgent sense of the
grave need of the women in our
district and other similar districts for
the political power which will enable
us to improve the grievous conditions
under which we at present live.

Before I ask you to hear what my
friends have to say, we wish to ask
you to consider the question of political
prisoners. Our leader has been sent
to prison nine times; nine times she
has been brought to death's door.
Her crime is only that of speaking.
As you know, men like James Larkin,
George Lansbury, Sir Edward Carson,
have all made seditious speeches. Sir
Edward Carson has committed sedi-
tious acts, and yet these men are
free. We put it to you that Miss
Pankhurst has suffered enough. We
remind you that the Home Secretary
stated the other day that a six or eight
days' hunger and thirst strike was a
far greater punishment than two or
three months' ordinary imprisonment.
Miss Pankhurst has endured this
awful torture 65 days, and her original
sentence was for three months' deten-
tion only. We would bid you remem-
ber that she is fighting for us in a
great spirit of devotion and heroism.
We feel bound to appeal to you on
her behalf. She will not appeal for
herself, but we do so for her, for we
know that she endures all this misery
and suffering for our sake and our
cause.

We also appeal for our comrade
Mrs. Walker, who is now in prison
also for a speech. Both these women
could go free if they would give way.
You are the head of a strong Govern-
ment; it is in your power to destroy
the body of Miss Pankhurst, but her
great spirit you cannot kill. We,
therefore, ask you to use your good
offices with the Home Secretary to
secure the unconditional release of
both these women, and send them
forth free that they may carry on the
good work of educating and organis-
ing the working class women of our
country, in order that we may obtain
for ourselves a fuller and better life.
We believe that by so doing you will
be conferring a real boon on the
women of the class to which we
belong.

I will call on Mrs. Hughes, who has worked
since she was ten years of age, as a brush
maker.

Mrs. HUGHES: I am a brush maker,
and I work from eight in the morning
till six at night, making brushes ten
hours a day, and while I work I have
to cut my hands with wire, as the
bristles are very soft to get in. I have
brought brushes to show to you. This
is a brush I have to make for 2d., and
it is worth 10s. 6d.

Mrs. Hughes then walked to the table and
laid a brush and bundle of bristles on it.
The Prime Minister and the officials who
were present started nervously, as though
they feared that the brush might be a bomb.

The PRIME MINISTER said: How
do you do it?

Mrs. HUGHES explained the whole
process.

The PRIME MINISTER: How many
hours does it take to do that?

Mrs. HUGHES: It takes me not quite
two. I have to do 200 of these knots
for 1d.

The PRIME MINISTER: I suppose
you are very expert at it?

Mrs. HUGHES: I have worked for
43 years at it.

The PRIME MINISTER: You can do
it quicker than other people?

Mrs. HUGHES: Yes, I can do it

quicker than those who have not been at it a good while. As I have to work so hard to support myself, I think it is very wrong that I cannot have a voice in the making of the laws that I have to uphold. I have to work for it, and I think I have a right to a vote the same as my husband. My husband hardly ever does any work, and I have to do all the housework and all the cooking I can get, which is not very much, though I do not look very bad on it. I do not like having to work 14 hours a day without having a voice on it, and I think when a woman works 14 hours a day she has a right to a vote, as my husband has, and he does not hardly work at all.

The PRIME MINISTER: What is he?

Mrs. HUGHES: He is a brush maker, but since the machinery has been about there is no work for brush finishers. He puts the backs on.

The PRIME MINISTER: Is that done by machinery?

Mrs. HUGHES: My husband does it by hand, but he cannot get enough of it because of the machinery.

The PRIME MINISTER: You do all the bristles?

Mrs. HUGHES: Yes. When that brush is done it is worth 10s., but I get 2d. for making it, and my husband gets 3d. for finishing it, and 14d. for boring the holes.

The PRIME MINISTER: He bores the holes?

Mrs. HUGHES: He bores the holes and puts the backs on, and I put the bristles in. I think I ought to have a voice in electing our Member of Parliament. We want votes for women.

Mrs. SCURR: The next who will speak to you is Mrs. Bird, the wife of a transport worker, and the mother of six children all under 13 years of age.

Mrs. BIRD: I am the wife of a transport worker whose wages are 25s. a week. When I first married he brought home 22s. He has had a rise of 3s. 6d. in 14 years. I would like you to understand that when there is a dock strike, and a husband gets a little rise, he does not always bring it home to his wife. I have one of the best men in Poplar, but, of course, I have a great struggle to fetch up six children under 13 years of age. By the time I have paid my rent, which is 6s. 6d. a week, 1s. 1d. insurance money, 1s. 6d. club money in case of sickness, and have bought my tea and sugar, you can tell we do not get a living, but an existence.

Of course, I am not out fighting for the vote for myself, as I am one of the best off people in the East End. There are thousands worse off than I am. There are thousands who only have 18s. a week to keep a much larger family. I am out fighting for my fellow brothers and sisters. I think we women should have a voice in the matter when we have to do this sort of thing. I urge you to have a Franchise Bill at once for all women over 21 years of age, and also to release Miss Pankhurst unconditionally with Mrs. Walker, the wife of a docker. I do feel that the housing conditions in the East End should be seen into. We do not have proper places to live in. They say that we should put our children in the back yards; but we have no back yards except fit for a dirt pail. They are not fit for children to play in, and, therefore, we have to leave our children to the mercy of the streets, motor buses, and so on. The housing conditions should be seen into, and I think when we women have a voice in the matter that is one of the first things we shall see into.

Mrs. SCURR: The next speaker is Mrs. Ford, who started work at eleven years of age, and for five years out of that time has had to work to keep a sick husband.

Mrs. FORD: I started work in a jam factory when I was eleven years and a fortnight old, and I stayed there until I was married. My husband fell sick very shortly afterwards, and for five years I had to keep him. I was left with two children—one, three and a-half years old, and one five years old. I then took up tailoring (as a trouser maker's presser), and I think I understand a great deal of the sweating conditions in the tailoring factories. I should like to give you an instance of what happened to me, and the sort of thing that happens to most women when they are left with young children. They know they are not earning enough to keep those young children and, therefore, are afraid to lose their work. In one place I was at, the

manager was very anxious to kiss me, and I should have had to submit to that to keep my work. It was either a case of losing my own self-respect or losing my children's food. Fortunately, I am a woman who can turn her hand to any sort of needlework, so, of course, I lost my work for it. In the same place where I work there was a young girl friend of mine who worked with me, and she was, perhaps, somewhat weak-willed, and the inevitable result happened. She had to go to the Workhouse to have a baby. When she came out she had no mother and no home to go to. I took her with me, and she shared my bed and my room, where there were five of us. Money was very short, and sooner than take the food, as she felt she was doing, out of my children's mouths, as she felt there was not enough for us, she went away, and I did not see her until three days afterwards, when she was drawn out of the river Lea with her child.

I think if women had something to do with making the laws, that is one of the first things they would alter. Surely, if a girl does wrong a man does wrong too, and why should she bear the brunt of it and bring up a little child, whereas the man, who is equally to blame, should go free, and there be nothing left for her to do but to take the life of her child and herself. I think it is one of the worst laws that could possibly exist—a law like that.

Then there are many reforms in factories and things like that, that men do not really know anything about. If a woman could have a word to say in that way, she could bring many forward, and I do think, as we have to work under those conditions, we should be the ones who should be able to bring forward reforms, and help to voice them and show what is really wanted in the reform of sweated labour.

Then, again, I should like to say with regard to Miss Sylvia Pankhurst and Mrs. Walker, as has been pointed out to you already, they have really committed no crime; and why should there be one law for a man and another for a woman, which is really the case. If Miss Sylvia Pankhurst is to be taken, and her life forfeited, why should George Lansbury, Mr. Scurr, and others be allowed to go free? I am not asking that they should be taken; but I do ask you, unconditionally, to release Miss Pankhurst and Mrs. Walker, when they have committed no crime.

Mrs. SCURR: The next speaker will be Mrs. Parsons, of Canning Town, who went to work when she was 12 years of age.

Mrs. PARSONS: I left school at 12 years of age, and had a delicate father, and a mother who had to work very hard at washing and charring. I had very often to help the neighbours do their work, for which I was paid 6d. a day and the little food they could give me, which was not very much, because people in the East End do not have very much food to give away. On the other spare days I used to help at home with the younger brothers while mother was at work. Then after a little while I went into a factory in Aldgate to work, and there I was a cigarette packer. We used to pack a thousand cigarettes for 3d., and in the morning when we were quite fresh starting work we could pack 2,000 cigarettes, but as we got tired after dinner we could only pack a thousand and a half. There you see that the wages some days that we earned were less than a shilling a day. In that factory the men were allowed time for lunch simply because they were men, but the girls and women, if we were fortunate enough to have lunch and could take bread and butter with us, had not a place in which to eat our lunch, and were forced to take it to the lavatory, and that we know is not altogether the thing. The men could quite openly come along with cans and eat whatever they liked to send out for, and sit and eat it at their leisure. We know that if the men were working under those conditions, through their Trade Unions and through their votes they would say they would not tolerate that sort of thing.

The PRIME MINISTER: Does that go on now?

Mrs. PARSONS: I believe so at the same factory, and yet, although that factory is sweating their girls and

women workers, they are able to pay dividends and bonuses, and present the buyers of their cigarettes with prizes for the coupons that are packed in with the cigarettes. There are two coupons with every ten cigarettes, for which they pay the paltry price of 3d.

The PRIME MINISTER: Will you let me know the name of the factory afterwards.

Mrs. PARSONS: Yes.

Now, as a young married mother, I have three little girls to bring up, two my own children and another a little niece, who has neither father nor mother. I feel if we women are able to perform the high and dignified duty of motherhood—and after all there are mothers who have brought statesmen into the world, because they have all had mothers, and we bring sailors, soldiers, policemen, and everybody into the world—we should at least have a say as to how those children should be brought up.

When I had the first little girl, I had a conscientious objection to vaccination, and I went to the local Magistrate for an exemption order. I thought I would save time by filling it up, and I presented it to him. The Magistrate laughed, and he said: "You cannot do anything with this. You are not the parent." But, I said, "I am the mother. Surely I know what is good for my own child;" but he said: "In the eyes of the law you are not the parent of your own child." We feel that is an insult to us. When we bring children into the world we at least should be able to say what is good for them. We mothers are with the children more than the fathers are, and in the event of a Dock Strike, or any other Strike for that matter, it is the mother who has to do the ferreting, and has to do the work and perform her own household duties as well.

With regard to Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, we are not asking to have the men arrested, but we do ask for her unconditional release. We feel that Sir Edward Carson has not only made inciting speeches, but he has said that the Irish streets would be flowing with blood, or some such statement. I am lost for the exact words. We feel that his incitement has been greater than hers, and he now should be in prison. We feel that the vote must be won shortly. We must have the vote. We are here to-day to demand a vote for every woman over the age of 21 years, and Miss Pankhurst is giving her life for the purpose of fighting for this vote.

We do protest when we go along in processions that suddenly, without a word of warning, we are pounced upon by detectives and policemen, women are bludgeoned, and women are called names by the cowardly detectives when nobody is about, and they are pinched and thrown all over the place. There was one old lady of 70, who was with us the other day, who was knocked down and kicked on the ground. She is a shirt maker, and is forced to work with a machine, and she has been in awful agony through the cowardly trick of a detective. These men are not fit to help to rule the country while we have no say in the matter.

We also ask for the release of Mrs. Walker, who is a docker's wife, and is a woman of my class, and we feel that she should not be in Holloway at this time, for making what the journalists like to call an inciting speech.

Mrs. SCURR: The next speaker is Mrs. Payne, a shoemaker of Bow.

Mrs. PAYNE: I was left without mother and father before I was five and brought up with a grandmother and grandfather, and they made shoes at 4d. a pair, so you can guess I had to start work very young; I was about ten years of age when I was learning sewing shoes. I got on with the work until I was married, then, after that my husband fell out of work and he had to learn the same work I had worked at all my life. So I have had to sit at work ever since, working hard by his side, and I have had to bring up an invalid daughter who was mentally deficient and lived till she was 27. I had to work at the side of my husband and beside having to work I had to look after my daughter and do everything for her. From the time she was born until she died she never combed her own hair. They make laws about our children without asking us. My daughter might have been

sent away to an institution if her father had agreed, and I should have had no voice in it. The mother has no voice in what shall be done now, and she has no voice in saying whether they shall make a law to take a defective child away without asking either the mother or the father.

Once when my girl was taken bad she went into the Poplar Workhouse because I thought I was compelled to let her go. When I got there the next morning they had placed her in a padded room, and I asked the doctor why she was there. He told me I had no voice, I was not to ask why or wherefore, only the father had the right. I do say I think it is wrong, when the mother has to work so hard and look after her children, that she has no voice, whether her child should be taken away from her or whether she should have it at home. If my girl had not had a good father to look after her, the same as her mother, I could not have got her out of the workhouse, but we got her the next day.

When I look round and see how, as women we have to work and lay the money out, I think we should have a voice in the matter. A man goes out to work and brings his money home and lays it on the table, and then he is able to go out. There are all the expenses of rent, clubs and everything, and then clothes wear out, and you have to find clothes for the children. Then you have to find the different things that wear out in the home, and it all has to come out of the weekly money. You do not get any extra. I think we ought to have a voice in the different laws for women, because when you make laws, such as this Mental Deficiency Bill, it is all very well to make them; but unless you have had dealings with the mentally deficient people you do not know what they really need. People can say: "Yes, they should be put away;" but who can look after them better than their own people? We come from the East End, and we have the voice of the people that they want us to ask you to give us the vote for every woman over 21, and also to release Miss Pankhurst.

Mrs. SCURR: That is all we have to say.

REPLY.

The PRIME MINISTER: I have received a great many deputations in this room and elsewhere from various organisations, both of men and women, asking for the extension of the franchise to your sex; and it is a mistake to suppose, as I think is suggested in one of the letters which preceded this interview, that those deputations have not consisted of, or not been representative of working women. That is not the case. I have listened to very remarkable speeches in this room from women workers representing the Textile trades in Lancashire and Yorkshire and other industries in various parts of the Kingdom, and I have always listened with peculiar interest and peculiar sympathy to the considerations which they have brought forward. That being the case, it is not true to say that the voice of the working woman has not been allowed to make itself heard in this matter; yet, upon consideration, I was glad to have the opportunity of meeting you for an hour this morning for two reasons: In the first place because I understand that you and the organisation with which you are connected dissociate yourselves altogether from those criminal methods which have done so much to impede the progress of your cause; and next, because I think the working people of the East End of London stand in some respects on a peculiar footing. They have at any rate a special case of their own which is well worthy of attention, and which, so far as I am concerned, as is always the case, I am much more glad to hear first hand from the people who are actually concerned in it, and whom it touches, than from outside advocates, however eloquent, able and trustworthy they may be.

I tell you quite frankly that I listened with the greatest interest to the statement which was read by Mrs. Scurr, and to what I might call the

(continued on page 60)

"DISTRICT REPORTS" unavoidably held over this week.

OUR MONTHLY AT HOME.

The E.L.F.S. Monthly At Home will be held at the Women's Hall, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, at 8 p.m., on Tuesday, June 30th. Miss Sylvia Pankhurst will speak for the first time since her release. Tickets, price 3d., from 321 Roman Road, Bow, E.

HOW IT HAPPENED.

MRS. WATKINS' ACCOUNT.

The Great Procession to the House of Commons on June 10th, to take the deputation of working women, was one of the most impressive sights ever seen in the E.L.F.S. campaign. After forming up, Miss Pankhurst, looking very weak and ill, was carried out in a spinal chair. One moment we were marching in quiet orderly manner, the next, before one had time to realise what it meant, a terrible commotion, and our leader was taken by the police.

When we realised that Miss Pankhurst was again arrested, we determined to go on and carry out her wishes at any cost. The procession formed again, gaining in size every yard of the way. Where was the hostility the Press make such talk about? Certainly there was none that night. Well, we got to the House, and what is more we got in. First we were informed that Mr. Asquith refused to see us, but Mr. Lansbury eventually got Sir William Byles to take nine women and three men into the Lobby. After a little time Mr. Illingworth came and spoke to us and promised that if we would send in a memorial, he would see that Mr. Asquith got it, but that the Prime Minister refused to see any of us that night. We expressed our disgust and disappointment and left for home.

On Thursday and Friday several women went to the House and spent their time in worrying different Members to use their influence to induce Mr. Asquith to receive the deputation. It was awfully hard work to get the Labour Members to see us.

On Saturday we started picketing outside Holloway, feeling sure that they dare not keep Miss Pankhurst longer than that. The picketing was kept up night and day, members and friends taking turns in picketing and in lobbying M.P.s.

On Thursday we saw Miss Pankhurst leave Holloway and then we went straight to Westminster. We knew that, if she were alive, she would carry out her determination, and not leave Westminster until Mr. Asquith had consented, or she had paid the price of his refusal with her life. After waiting patiently for some time, a motor came with her accompanied by a nurse. We waited, hoping against hope that extreme measures would not have to be taken.

The saddest sight and one of the cruellest that one could see in a lifetime, was when she was lifted out of the car, too ill to help herself in any way, and laid down on the steps at the Strangers' Entrance. Inspector Rogers informed her that she would not be allowed to stay there; she told him she would wait until Mr. Asquith consented to receive the deputation. Just as the police were about to drag her away, Mr. Lansbury came out, and it would be impossible to describe the joy we felt on hearing that the Prime Minister had given in by promising to receive six working women at 11 o'clock on Saturday morning. How we all cheered, and with what joy we went home, knowing, for a time at least, the life we all value so much was to be spared, and the terrible torture for that night at any rate, was over.

A great crowd of women had been waiting outside the Women's Hall all the evening. They were crying bitterly; but when the news came over the telephone that Mr. Asquith had given way, they burst out laughing and cheering.

HOW THE E.L.F.S. WORKED.

The day after June 10, when Miss Sylvia Pankhurst was snatched away out of the procession and the Prime Minister refused to see the East London deputation, the plans of campaign were hastily sketched out and matured. Meetings of members were held in each of the districts, at which volunteers came forward eagerly for every kind of work that was needed. The instant their day's work was over, working women and men set off to interview their Member of Parliament at the House of Commons, to urge them to do all they could to get Mr. Asquith to yield. This work was kept up every day until the end, and Mr. Asquith, Mr. McKenna and other M.P.s were bombarded with letters and postcards to the same effect.

Then, for the younger members especially, there was poster-parading, bill distribution, and Dreadnought selling. There was the picketing outside Holloway, to wait for the release of our dear prisoner—day and night—by day, in two-hour stretches; by night, for all night at once; we took our turns at this sentry duty.

Our young factory-girl workers cheerfully devoted the only leisure of their busy week to work of one kind or another. The married women, as cheerfully, and by dint of getting up earlier and carefully planning their work, took their share of all.

MARY PATERSON.

CHRISTMAS SAVINGS' CLUB.

The members of the East London Federation of the Suffragettes are forming a Christmas Savings' Slate Club. Full particulars will be announced next week.

Continued from page 59.

special individual experience of the various members of the deputation by which the statement has been reinforced. I think it is a very moderate and well reasoned presentation of your case, and I will give it, you may be quite sure, very careful and mature consideration.

I am not going to enter into anything of argument or indeed to deal, as far as I can avoid it, with any controversial topic; but I think I am right in saying that the substance of the case you have presented to me to-day comes to this; that the economic conditions under which women labour in a community like, for instance, the East End of London, are such that either in the way of legislation, or perhaps in the way of administration, we cannot get substantial and intelligent reform unless women themselves have a voice in choosing representatives for Parliament. I think that is your case?

Mrs. SCURR and the other members of the deputation: Yes.

The PRIME MINISTER: I think that fairly states the substance of it; and you have each of you given me special illustrations drawn from your own experience, or from the experience of your leaders, to show that that is not a mere rhetorical statement, but does correspond to the actual facts of East End life.

As I say, I am not going to argue, because I will take all these things into careful consideration; but it is only fair to point out, what indeed I think more than one speaker has acknowledged, that these bad conditions, as in many respects they are (and no-one feels that more strongly than I do) if you cast your eyes back, have been substantially mitigated—I do not say they have been brought up to the level which we all hope to see attained—by the legislation of my administration. For instance, I will only give two illustrations, one, the Trades Board Bill two or three years ago. It has not raised women's wages to the extent that we should like to see them raised, but it has undoubtedly made a substantial improvement on the condition of things which prevailed before. In the same way with regard to what you were telling me just now about the cigarette factory—and I agree many other illustrations might be given—I think there is very little doubt that the introduction of women in increasing numbers into the factory inspectorate has improved things in the interests of female labour as compared to what they were 30 or 40 years ago. I have always been a very strong advocate of that reform, and I should like to see it even more widely extended than it is.

There are special cases, and very sad cases, such as those that several speakers have referred to, in regard to the position of deserted wives, and young unmarried mothers, which no doubt do call for very special consideration; but in regard to which, even if every woman over 21 had a vote and could exercise it, and get returned to the House of Commons, or help to return to the House of Commons, people who were in sympathy with her wishes and wants on the matter, you would still find the legislative problem—I won't say insoluble, but exceedingly difficult.

The best brains of the country, inspired by the strongest sympathy, and thoroughly representative of all interests concerned, I do not think—I will not go so far as to say you will never be able to do it—but I may say it is a very difficult and complex problem, which cannot be solved by any short cut, or by any heroic remedy.

But, as I said, I do not want to argue these matters with you at all, and I will give the most careful consideration to what you have said.

On one point I am glad to say I am in complete agreement with you. I have always said, and I think I have been reminded by Mrs. Scurr that I have said, that if you are going to give the franchise to women, you must give it to them upon the same terms that you do to men. That is, make it a

democratic measure. It is no good tinkering with a thing of this kind. If the discrimination of sex is not sufficient to justify the giving of the vote to one sex and the withholding of it from another, it follows, a fortiori, it seems to me, that discrimination of sex does not justify, and cannot warrant giving the woman a restricted form of franchise while you give the men an unrestricted form.

On that point I am entirely with you. If the change has to come, we must face it boldly, and make it thorough going and democratic in its basis.

The other point you brought before me is in regard to these two ladies, Miss Pankhurst and Mrs. Walker, who I think have been bound over.

Mrs. SCURR: They were ordered to be bound over.

The PRIME MINISTER: Yes, that is what we call being bound over.

Mr. GEORGE LANSBURY: They went to prison in default.

The PRIME MINISTER: Yes. What I understand you to say about them is that they are not being punished for taking part in any form of violence?

Mrs. PARSONS: No, just speaking.

The PRIME MINISTER: I understand Miss Sylvia Pankhurst's organisation to discountenance anything of that kind.

The PRIME MINISTER: But they are in prison in effect for speeches they have delivered.

Mrs. PARSONS: After all, free speech has been fought out hundreds of years ago, and it seems a terrible thing if people have to fight it out again now.

The PRIME MINISTER: I do not want to argue it. I only want to know the facts, and that is the fact as you present it to me.

First of all you said there is a different measure of justice, or injustice, whichever you like to call it, meted out as between men and women on these matters; and quite apart from that, the allegation or suggestion is that the sexes are not being equally treated. This is a form of offence like any other form of criminal violence which is punishable. However, that is your point. I shall be very glad to speak to the Home Secretary about these cases and consult with him about them. I am sure there is not the faintest disposition in any quarter to be vindictive; and though it has unfortunately become necessary to take such steps as might be taken to repress the use of organised violence, yet there is no desire whatever on the part of any of my colleagues, and certainly not on my own part, to in any way interfere with the fullest expression of free speech and the proper organisation of union in all the forms with which we are so familiar in our English life to-day, in order to attain, whether we regard it as right or wrong, expedient or inexpedient, what is after all a perfectly constitutional purpose.

I think I must ask you to be content with those expressions; and the assurance that I will give this Memorial you have presented to me, and the arguments with which you have supported it, the most careful consideration.

Mrs. SCURR: Mr. Asquith. We thank you for receiving us, and, while feeling disappointed, we also thank you because you tell us you will give it full consideration.

We thank you also for saying that you will see as to the sentences of these two women being mitigated.

The PRIME MINISTER: I should like to confer with the Home Secretary about it. It is really his department.

Mrs. SCURR: I do not want to argue again; but I want to say something on one of the things you said. While we know that our organisation at present has not committed arson, we do not want to criticise the other organisations, because we feel that in the past men have used all sorts of methods.

The deputation then withdrew.

ROLL OF HONOUR.

June 18th—Miss Arabella Scott re-arrested under "Cat and Mouse" Act.
June 19th—Mrs. Shaw Brown re-arrested.
June 21st—Miss Sarah Benett released after a three days' hunger and thirst strike.
June 22nd—Lilian Mitchell and Margaret Heley released from Wonsan Green Gaol after ten days' hunger and thirst strike.

THIS WEEK'S MILITANCY.

June 19th—Attempt on Parish Church, Beckenham.
June 21st—Bomb explosion in Dublin.
June 23rd—Bomb found in St. Mary's Parish Church, Reading.
June 25th—Barnes Sports' Pavilion destroyed by fire.
Church damaged near Belfast.

On Wednesday, Captain Murray, M.P., asked the Home Secretary whether detectives might not be set to watch every militant Suffragette. But Mr. McKenna said "No."

COME TO THE KINGSWAY HALL

On TUESDAY, July 7th, at 8 p.m.

Mrs. JULIA SCURR

Will speak on the Working Women's Deputation to Asquith. Other speakers—

Mrs. PETHICK LAWRENCE.

Madame YVETTE GUILBERT.

Mr. H. D. HARBEN.

Mr. H. W. NEVINSON.

Chair - Miss LENA ASHWELL.

Tickets: Reserved 2s. 6d. and 1s., Unreserved 6d.

Apply to—

Ticket Sec., UNITED SUFFRAGISTS, 3 Adam Street, Strand.

A CLERGYMAN DUCKED.

On Saturday, June 20th, Mr. Lloyd George addressed a Liberal fete gathering at Denmark Hill. He was not allowed to speak without a reminder of the way in which a "Liberal" Government tortures women. The crowd immediately began to demonstrate their support of Liberal practice by assaulting the interrupters. The Rev. C. A. Wills, who did not interrupt Mr. Lloyd George—but simply tried to protect the Suffragettes, against whom the odds were several thousand to one—was set upon by the cowardly hooligans which Mr. Lloyd George, of all Cabinet Ministers, seems to attract. After being badly mauled, he, and two other friends, were thrown into the adjacent pond. Many women were badly hurt. A man who witnessed the whole occurrence and subsequently examined Mr. Wills, writes:—"The flesh round his eyes had swollen enormously and was a dark purple colour. There was a dark bruise on his left cheek-bone, and his nose was cut and swollen. His lips were swollen and there was a bruise on his chin. There were marks of a man's fingers on his throat, while on his face there were innumerable small cuts. . . . His head had been bleeding and was exceedingly sore; on the left side of the scalp there was a patch about three-quarters of an inch square where a great tuft of hair had been pulled out. The action of the heart was unsteady."

This is the lot of every real reformer since time began. We are glad to range ourselves with those who are mal-treated in the fight for freedom, rather than with the triumphant hooligans who support Mr. Lloyd George.

A Specially Attractive

CONCERT

(In aid of the Funds of the Distress Committee, formed to help the wives and children of the locked-out builders)

WILL BE HELD IN

THE WOMAN'S HALL,

400 Old Ford Road, Bow,

ON SATURDAY, JULY 4TH, AT 8 P.M.

TO BE SOLD FOR THE E.L.F. FUNDS.

A friend has given a Long Amber Bead Necklace (new), price 15s.; also an old-fashioned Gold Locket, oriental onyx in centre, surrounded by small stones. Enquiries to be made of Mrs. Hicks, 33 Downside Crescent, Hampstead.

A friend has given an antique Garnet Ring for sale. Enquiries to be made to Miss Smyth, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

Mrs. Osmond wishes to sell five fully paid "D" shares, value £1 each, in the Labour Newspapers, Ltd. (Daily Citizen), for the funds of the East London Federation of the Suffragettes.

The following resolution was passed on Monday, 22nd, inst., at 606 Branch of the Workers' Union, held at Stratford:—"That this Branch calls on Bro. Duncan to ask the Home Secretary—Mr. McKenna—why it is that George Lansbury, John Scurr, Jim Larkin and Sir Edward Carson are allowed to go free for making seditious speeches, and Sylvia Pankhurst and Mrs. Walker, the wife of a docker, are imprisoned for the same offence, as it seems to us that there is one law for the men and another for the women." A similar resolution was passed by the West Ham Branch of the N.U.R.

SUFFRAGE WORKERS, keep fit, by spending week-ends at breezy Brighton. Board residence (vegetarian or otherwise).—Miss Turner (W.S.P.U.), "Sea View," Victoria Road. Terms—From 3s. per day, or 18s. per week.